



**Date of Council Meeting: June 8, 2015**

**TOWN OF LEESBURG  
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
INFORMATION MEMO**

**Subject:** Status of H-2/East Market Street Plan

**Staff Contact:** Susan Berry Hill, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning

**Council Action Requested:** None at this time

**Staff Recommendation:** None at this time.

**Commission Recommendation:** None at this time.

**Fiscal Impact:** None at this time.

**Work Plan Impact:** Due to heavy workloads in all areas of the Department of Planning and Zoning work program, particularly land development applications, the Department has not been able to start this project. Staff resources necessary for this project will include a Project Manager and assistance from the Preservation Planner with oversight from the Director. The project will involve three general areas of work: 1) Establishing the vision for the Corridor (community outreach with property owners, residents, and Boards and Commissions); 2) Drafting of the Guidelines and Plan; and 3) public hearing process with Planning Commission and Council. Staff estimates this effort will take approximately 12 months.

**Executive Summary:** In 2008, the Town Council directed that a committee be formed to make recommendations on the H-2 Design Guidelines. After consideration of issues and options, the H-2 Committee made recommendations to the Town Council in June, 2009. Follow up work on the Committee's recommendations was not started at that time because work was also underway to develop a form-based code for the Crescent District. In addition, the Planning Commission and staff began work on a multi-year project to update the Town Plan.

As a follow up to the Town Plan Update, the Planning Commission reviewed the Town Plan Action Program in 2012-13 and made recommendations to the Town Council that the H-2 Guidelines update be included in the short list of priority work items. In September, 2013, the Town Council accepted the Planning Commission's recommendation regarding inclusion of the H-2 Guidelines update in the Town Plan Action Plan priority list. Council also suggested that the H-2 Guideline update be combined with work on the East Market Street Small Area Plan. Council directed that these recommendations be included in Department work plans. Since that direction was

given, staff has completed one item and is half done with a second item both of which were on the Action Program priority list. However, to date, staff has been unable to start this project due to heavy land development application caseload and other Council-directed work priorities.

**Background:**

H-2 Committee: The Committee's recommendations are briefly summarized as follows:

1. Location and depth of H-2 corridors. The location and depth of the H-2 District should be maintained with some modifications.
2. Regulations. To achieve and maintain an effective H-2 Corridor Program, guidelines and regulations (Zoning Ordinance, DCSM) should both be employed.
3. Revisions to Guidelines. The H-2 Guidelines should be revised to clearly state the vision for the corridor; better reflect the character for each of the four corridor areas; address best practices of good site design as well as building design; and address streetscaping.
4. Review Process. The Committee recommended that administrative reviews be used as much as possible. Also, for legislative applications (rezonings and special exceptions), referrals should be provided from the BAR to the project planner regarding compliance with H-2 guidelines. These referrals would address 'big picture' design issues like scale and massing. Architectural details would be handled through the normal H-2 review process through an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness reviewed by the BAR.

Staff notes that procedural process improvements were subsequently implemented pertaining to #4 above to better integrate review of legislative land development projects that are situated within the H-2 corridor. These process improvements have yielded a more coordinated review process for applicants, BAR, Planning Commission and Council alike.

H-2/East Market Street Area Plan: The purpose of this planning effort is to develop *more specific, and more integrated land use, transportation and design policy and guidelines* for the area that exists east of the Bypass and extends to the corporate limits. This geographic area is prioritized for this planning effort because this area of Town is where remaining new development will take place, including a key undeveloped, singular tract that is situated north of East Market Street between the Outlet Mall and Battlefield Parkway. Planning objectives for this effort include:

- *Land use* - The Town Plan land use for this portion of the corridor designates a significant portion for Regional Office. During the Town Plan update, there was general agreement that this designation should be expanded to consider other land use scenarios including mixed use development. More recently the Town has also emphasized production employment uses (e.g. K2M) as a desirable land use.

- *Transportation* – The Battlefield/Market Street interchange has recently been funded for design by the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA). The planned road network in this section of East Market Street should be reviewed and updated to assure that access to all properties is afforded in the near term and in the future when East Market Street becomes a limited-access facility. This planning effort will attempt to increase multi-modal mobility in the area yet be mindful of cost and environmental considerations.
- *Design* - The H-2 Committee recommended that an approach be used that is a combination of guidelines and regulation to achieve the best design outcomes, for all areas of the H-2 corridor. This planning process will develop particular corridor objectives for East Market Street and consider if/how to revise the H-2 guidelines and if/how to develop zoning regulations to further implement the guidelines.

Remainder of H-2 Areas - The H-2 Guidelines should also be reviewed for areas along North and South King Street and West Market Street which would be another work project. Very few applications are processed in these areas using the H-2 Guidelines. The most notable application recently was the Catholic Church on north King Street. As such, while a work effort to update the H-2 Guidelines has been directed by Council, staff believes that work on the North and South King and West Market Street sections will be less pressing than the H-2/ East Market Street Corridor project because there is more development pressure in the East Market area. The Town will have an opportunity through this H-2/East Market planning process to work with property owners, residents, the PC, BAR, EDC, and others to shape future development in a way that will be aligned with the design objectives of the Town.